

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL  
RESOURCES AND CONSERVATION  
NORTHWESTERN LAND OFFICE



STEVE BULLOCK, GOVERNOR

STATE OF MONTANA

KALISPELL UNIT  
655 Timberwolf Parkway, Suite 2, Kalispell, MT 59901  
Phone: (406) 751-2241, Fax: (406) 751-2286

POLSON FIELD OFFICE  
PO Box 640 Polson, MT 59860  
Phone: (406) 833-3960, Fax (406) 833-1874

January 29, 2019

REF: F.H. Stoltze application for Alternative Practice on McKee property

To: Cameron Wohlschlegel, Forester

This letter is in reference to the application for Alternative Practices (AP) submitted by Cameron Wohlschlegel representing F.H Stoltze Land and Lumber. The AP requested involves using an existing clearing which is located partially within the SMZ of Schmidt Creek, a class 1 stream. The AP requests the storing of logs and equipment operation within the SMZ.

After a site visit and review of the Checklist Environmental Assessment prepared for this request, the Alternative Practice to store logs and operate machinery within the SMZ is approved, subject to the following conditions.

1. No whole-tree processing will occur in the landing area. Knot bumping and limbing of logs is allowed.
2. A slash filter windrow will be constructed for a distance of 75 feet on the edge of the existing cleared area immediately adjacent to the slope break leading down to Schmidt Creek. Location will be flagged by DNRC Service Forester. Slash filter will remain in place through the end of spring runoff at a minimum.
3. Equipment Operation within the SMZ will be kept to a minimum and only operated within the existing cleared area and old road bed.
4. Equipment operation within the SMZ will occur under "winter" conditions with a minimum of 12" of snow and frozen soil conditions.
5. Any snow removed to facilitate the loading of trucks will be pushed to the NW corner of the existing cleared area outside the SMZ
6. Any residual slash, beyond what is used for the slash filter windrow will be disposed of outside the SMZ.
7. Any disturbed soil will be seeded with grass after the project is complete.

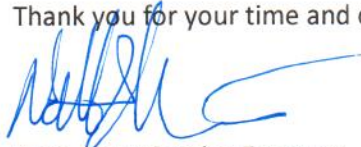
Approved Alternative Practices, including any additional provisions required by DNRC, shall have the same force and authority as the standards contained in 77-5-303 MCA, and shall be enforceable under 77-5-305 MCA, to the same extent of such standards.

It will be the responsibility of F.H Stoltze Land and Lumber to understand that this Alternative Practice has been issued for operations on the Mckee property, and that all conditions outlined above must be met to achieve compliance with the SMZ law.

This approval is contingent upon the execution and return of the attached Responsibility Affidavit to Ali Ulwell at the NWLO in Kalispell. No actions related to this Alternative Practice are authorized until the signed statement is returned to the DNRC.

Please contact me or Ali if you have any questions or concerns.

Thank you for your time and cooperation.



Nate Arno, Service Forester

DNRC: Polson Field Office

[Nathan.arno@mt.gov](mailto:Nathan.arno@mt.gov)

406-883-3960

CC: HRA File  
Landowner  
F.H Stoltze Land and Lumber  
Forestry Assistance Bureau

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January 29, 2019

ALTERNATIVE PRACTICE RESPONSIBILITY AFFIDAVIT

McKee/Gistaro Commercial Harvest and Fire Hazard Reduction

In consideration of the DNRC's approval of the Alternative Practice for the McKee/Gistaro Commercial Harvest and Fire Hazard Reduction Project located in the NW1/4, NW1/4 of Section 17, T26N, R18W, I hereby certify that I, or by written contract the legal entity I represent, am responsible for compliance of the Montana Streamside Management Zone Law. I understand that failure to implement any of the mitigation measures required by DNRC will be considered violation of the SMZ Law and may result in penalties assessed against me or the legal entity I represent.

Cameron Wohlschlegel, Forester F.H. Stoltze Land and Lumber

Date



## CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

<b>Project Name</b>	Stoltze/Mckee Commercial Harvest and Fire Hazard Reduction
<b>Proposed Implementation Date:</b>	February 4, 2019
<b>Proponent:</b>	F.H. Stoltze Land and Lumber
<b>Location:</b>	NW1/4 NW1/4 S17 T26N R218W 26382 Red Owl Rd. Bigfork MT 59911
<b>County:</b>	Lake

### I. TYPE AND PURPOSE OF ACTION

The project involves a potential issuance of an Alternative Practice (AP) to store/deck logs and operate equipment on a pre-existing landing area which is partially located within a Class 1 Streamside Management Zone (SMZ). The existing cleared landing area was made when the roads servicing the area were built and is 0.14 acre in size. There are no other suitable locations to deck logs from the proposed harvest area. The purpose of the harvest operation is to reduce the risk of high intensity catastrophic wildfire and promote forest health and vigor. The harvest operation is approximately 7 acres adjacent to neighboring homes and property. The project is located on private property within the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) which contributes to the overall wildfire risk along the base of the Swan Mountain Range. The primary purpose of the AP is to support harvest operations.

### II. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

#### 1. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT, AGENCIES, GROUPS OR INDIVIDUALS CONTACTED:

*Provide a brief chronology of the scoping and ongoing involvement for this project.*

Internal DNRC scoping for this project was conducted.

#### 2. OTHER GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES WITH JURISDICTION, LIST OF PERMITS NEEDED:

No other agencies or permits involved.

#### 3. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:

- A. **No Action:** No AP will be issued and any products harvested in the 7 acres would have to be transported along the existing road uphill or adversely yarded up the hill to a location outside of the SMZ. Due to topographic and ownership boundary constraints, this alternative would be cost prohibitive and the project would not be feasible to complete.
- B. An AP will be granted to store/deck logs and operate equipment in a pre-existing landing area which is partially located within the SMZ of Schmidt Creek, a Class 1 stream. No whole-tree processing will be allowed at the landing area. Knot bumping and limbing will be allowed. A slash filter windrow will be established for a distance of 75 feet on the edge of the existing cleared area immediately adjacent to the slope break leading down to Schmidt Creek. Equipment Operation will be kept to a minimum and will only be allowed to operate in the existing cleared area. Equipment operation will only be allowed to operate with a minimum of 12" of snow and frozen soil conditions. Any snow removed to make room for loading of trucks will be pushed into the NW corner of the existing clearing which is outside the SMZ. Any residual slash will be piled and burned in the NW corner of the landing area outside the SMZ. Any disturbed soil will be seeded with grass after the project is complete.



### III. IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

- *RESOURCES* potentially impacted are listed on the form, followed by common issues that would be considered.
- Explain *POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATIONS* following each resource heading.
- Enter "NONE" if no impacts are identified or the resource is not present.

#### 4. GEOLOGY AND SOIL QUALITY, STABILITY AND MOISTURE:

*Consider the presence of fragile, compactable or unstable soils. Identify unusual geologic features. Specify any special reclamation considerations. Identify any cumulative impacts to soils.*

The proposed location of the AP is split almost exactly along the SMZ boundary line. The area outside the SMZ is classified as Wildgen Very Gravelly Loam and the area inside the SMZ is classified Courville Gravelly silt loam. Both soil types are known to be resistant to compaction and not very erodible on flat ground. The proposed landing area was created through the excavation of Red Owl Road and the unnamed road branching off the SW corner of the proposed landing area. Equipment will only operate with frozen ground conditions and 12" of snow protection. Equipment operation within the SMZ will be minimized. Very minimal soil disturbance or compaction is expected and no cumulative impacts are expected.

#### 5. WATER QUALITY, QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION:

*Identify important surface or groundwater resources. Consider the potential for violation of ambient water quality standards, drinking water maximum contaminant levels, or degradation of water quality. Identify cumulative effects to water resources.*

The proposed location of the AP is immediately adjacent to Schmidt Creek, a Class 1 stream. A mass run-off event would have the potential to deposit debris into the creek without being filtered through natural or artificial barriers to sediment. This potential exists with both alternatives outlined above. Any long term or cumulative impacts that may be experienced will be a result of the existing road-way which is in use for residential traffic. The short-term use of the existing landing area will not contribute to any cumulative impacts. The installation of a slash filter windrow will provide sediment filtration for both short-term and long-term impacts. The proposed operation has an expected duration of about 2 weeks. The short duration and time of year (winter) will minimize any disturbance that would promote sediment deposit into the creek.

#### 6. AIR QUALITY:

*What pollutants or particulate would be produced? Identify air quality regulations or zones (e.g. Class I air shed) the project would influence. Identify cumulative effects to air quality.*

The harvest operations will produce short durations of smoke due to the burning of post-harvest slash. All burning will be done outside the SMZ and is not included in the AP analysis.

#### 7. VEGETATION COVER, QUANTITY AND QUALITY:

*What changes would the action cause to vegetative communities? Consider rare plants or cover types that would be affected. Identify cumulative effects to vegetation.*

The existing cleared area is currently occupied by several species of noxious weeds including, St. Johnswort, Spotted Knapweed, and Dalmation Toadflax due to the soil disturbance when the area was created. The vegetative concern is not for any native or rare plant communities, but for the spreading and proliferation of the existing weed species. The short duration of activity while there is adequate snow cover and frozen ground will minimize the spread of viable seed. The slash filter windrow will help contain any seed source from leaving the landing area during spring run-off. Any disturbed soil will be seeded with grass in the spring.



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**8. TERRESTRIAL, AVIAN AND AQUATIC LIFE AND HABITATS:**

*Consider substantial habitat values and use of the area by wildlife, birds or fish. Identify cumulative effects to fish and wildlife.*

The proposed AP will affect an area less than one-quarter acre in size. The disturbance to Schmidt Creek and the adjacent wildlife habitat occurred when the roads were built to serve the residential area. The short duration and size of the proposed activities will have very little if any additional impact on these resources. No cumulative effects on fish or wildlife as a result of this proposal is expected.

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**9. UNIQUE, ENDANGERED, FRAGILE OR LIMITED ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES:**

*Consider any federally listed threatened or endangered species or habitat identified in the project area. Determine effects to wetlands. Consider Sensitive Species or Species of special concern. Identify cumulative effects to these species and their habitat.*

No federally listed threatened or endangered species have been identified in the immediate project area.

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**10. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES:**

*Identify and determine effects to historical, archaeological or paleontological resources.*

No historical or archaeological resources have been identified in the project area.

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**11. AESTHETICS:**

*Determine if the project is located on a prominent topographic feature, or may be visible from populated or scenic areas. What level of noise, light or visual change would be produced? Identify cumulative effects to aesthetics.*

The project area is located along a private driveway. Any visual impact or noise will only be visible to surrounding private landowners. The proposed AP outlined in this assessment will have no impact to populated or scenic areas.

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**12. DEMANDS ON ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES OF LAND, WATER, AIR OR ENERGY:**

*Determine the amount of limited resources the project would require. Identify other activities nearby that the project would affect. Identify cumulative effects to environmental resources.*

This project does not require the use of any limited resources in the area. The project will not affect any other activities in the area.

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**13. OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTS PERTINENT TO THE AREA:**

*List other studies, plans or projects on this tract. Determine cumulative impacts likely to occur as a result of current private, state or federal actions in the analysis area, and from future proposed state actions in the analysis area that are under MEPA review (scoped) or permitting review by any state agency.*

No other plans or projects are scheduled for this property. No cumulative impacts are likely to occur as a result of other private, state, or federal projects in the area.

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IV. IMPACTS ON THE HUMAN POPULATION
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- |   |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• RESOURCES potentially impacted are listed on the form, followed by common issues that would be considered.</li><li>• Explain POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATIONS following each resource heading.</li><li>• Enter "NONE" if no impacts are identified or the resource is not present.</li></ul> |
|---|

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**14. HUMAN HEALTH AND SAFETY:**

*Identify any health and safety risks posed by the project.*

No health or safety risks are posed by this project.

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**15. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURE ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION:**

*Identify how the project would add to or alter these activities.*

The harvest operations adjacent to the proposed AP are expected to produce approximately 25 MBF of sawtimber which will support regional wood processing facilities and contractors. The "No Action" alternative would eliminate the commercial and industrial benefits, due to the project becoming financially unfeasible.

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**16. QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYMENT:**

*Estimate the number of jobs the project would create, move or eliminate. Identify cumulative effects to the employment market.*

The project will provide direct employment for several people for approximately two weeks. The project supports the regional wood products industry in which many people are employed. No jobs would be eliminated as a result of the proposed alternative. If the "no action" alternative is selected the project will become unfeasible and will not happen. No long term effects on the employment market are expected.

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**17. LOCAL AND STATE TAX BASE AND TAX REVENUES:**

*Estimate tax revenue the project would create or eliminate. Identify cumulative effects to taxes and revenue.*

No significant tax revenue would be created or eliminated by the project.

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**18. DEMAND FOR GOVERNMENT SERVICES:**

*Estimate increases in traffic and changes to traffic patterns. What changes would be needed to fire protection, police, schools, etc.? Identify cumulative effects of this and other projects on government services*

A temporary increase in traffic on Red Owl Road (Private) and then on to Hwy 83 would occur, however, the volume and increase would be minimal. No changes to or cumulative effects are expected for local government entities.

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**19. LOCALLY ADOPTED ENVIRONMENTAL PLANS AND GOALS:**

*List State, County, City, USFS, BLM, Tribal, and other zoning or management plans, and identify how they would affect this project.*

No zoning or other management plans will be affected by this project.

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**20. ACCESS TO AND QUALITY OF RECREATIONAL AND WILDERNESS ACTIVITIES:**

*Identify any wilderness or recreational areas nearby or access routes through this tract. Determine the effects of the project on recreational potential within the tract. Identify cumulative effects to recreational and wilderness activities.*

No public access is allowed through the project area and will have no impact on recreational amenities in the area.

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**21. DENSITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION AND HOUSING:**

*Estimate population changes and additional housing the project would require. Identify cumulative effects to population and housing.*

None.



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**22. SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND MORES:**

*Identify potential disruption of native or traditional lifestyles or communities.*

None

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**23. CULTURAL UNIQUENESS AND DIVERSITY:**

*How would the action affect any unique quality of the area?*

The proposed AP will have no impact on the area outside the private property.

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**24. OTHER APPROPRIATE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES:**

*Estimate the return to the trust. Include appropriate economic analysis. Identify potential future uses for the analysis area other than existing management. Identify cumulative economic and social effects likely to occur as a result of the proposed action.*

This project is entirely on private property, however, the existing fire danger as a result of forest conditions in the area effect all neighbors and the greater WUI landscape. Neighboring landowners stand to benefit from harvest activities in which this proposal supports. If the "no action" alternative is chosen the project will not happen and that risk will not be abated.

<b>EA Checklist Prepared By:</b>	<b>Name:</b> Nathan Arno	<b>Date:</b> January 28, 2019
	<b>Title:</b> Service Forester	

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**V. FINDING**

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**25. ALTERNATIVE SELECTED:**

Alternative B is selected

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**26. SIGNIFICANCE OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS:**

No significant impacts are expected due to the mitigations described in this treatment.

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**27. NEED FOR FURTHER ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:**☐

EIS

☐

More Detailed EA

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No Further Analysis

<b>EA Checklist Approved By:</b>	<b>Name:</b> David M. Poukish
	<b>Title:</b> Kalispell Unit Manager, DNRC
<b>Signature:</b> /s/ David M. Poukish	<b>Date:</b> 1/29/2019



# ArcGIS Web Map



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The Montana Department of Natural Resources & Conservation

Ownership Parcels County Lines

Reference Markers Current Fires

IA Stations Less than 10000 acres

10000 - 24999 50000 - 99999 Complex Points Part of Complex

25000 - 49999 More than 100000 Current Fire Perimeters Latest Perimeters

Not Part of Complex



Map of Alternative Practice





# ArcGIS Web Map

Schmidt  
Creek

xxxx - Landing  
Slash Filter

Harvest  
Area

5M2

Old  
ROAD

Red Owl

Montana State Library, Sources: Esri, HERE, Garmin, Intermap, increment P Corp.,  
GEBCO, USGS, FAO, NPS, NRCAN, GeoBase, IGN, Kadaster NL, Ordnance Survey, Esri  
Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), swisstopo, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the  
GIS User Community, Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation,  
AccuWeather, Inc.



The Montana Department of  
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Ownership Parcels County Lines

Reference Markers Current Fires

IA Stations

10000 - 24999

25000 - 49999

More than 100000

Complex Points

Current Fire Perimeters

Not Part of Complex

Part of Complex

Latest Perimeters

0 0.01750.035 0.07 0.105 0.14  
Miles

# Soil Map—Lake County Area, Montana



Map Scale: 1:379 if printed on A landscape (11" x 8.5") sheet.

Map projection: Web Mercator Corner coordinates: WGS84 Edge tics: UTM Zone 12N WGS84



## Map Unit Legend

Map Unit Symbol	Map Unit Name	Acres in AOI	Percent of AOI
30	Courville gravelly silt loam, 30 to 60 percent slopes	0.3	51.6%
180	Wildgen very gravelly loam, 30 to 60 percent slopes	0.2	48.4%
Totals for Area of Interest		0.5	100.0%